How to Use the Career Pathways Planning Assessment Tool

The assessment tool is organized under the Six Key Elements of Career Pathways Framework and includes corresponding indicators that are components of each element. Your agency and/or team should examine each indicator to assess your progress of achieving that element. A four-point scale representing the phases of an ongoing development process will help you assess progress. For each indicator, identify the place on the scale that best reflects your current effort and circle the number.

The four-point scale to assess progress is based on the following definitions:

1. **Initiation Phase:** The team has discussed this indicator but has not started planning.
2. **Planning Phase**: The team is engaged in a planning process to agree upon the steps necessary to move forward.
3. **Implementation Phase:** The team has completed planning and is in the process of implementing strategies.
4. **Sustain/Enhance Phase:** Strategies have been fully implemented. The team is managing for sustainability and further enhancement of this indicator.

The priority for action on any indicator can be ranked as high, medium, or low by circling A, B, or C (respectively) in the far right column.

1. As an agency and/or team, discuss and complete the phases of development section of the self-assessment. For each indicator, rate the progress using the four-point scale:

    1 = Initiation Phase
    2 = Planning Phase
    3 = Implementation Phase
    4 = Sustain/Enhance Phase

1. Next, complete the priority section of the self-assessment in the context of a discreet time frame (e.g. the next 6 months). It is helpful to limit the number of high priority activities and to force a few lows in each section.
2. Finally, bring your completed *Career pathways Planning Assessment Tool* to the **Career Pathways Kick-off Event on October 18** prepared to evaluate your overall progress towards achieving the key elements and develop an action plan to help you begin to move forward.

Career Pathways Planning Assessment Tool

1. Build cross-agency partnerships.				

Please indicate the phase of implementation of your region for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/ Enhance Phase	Priority for Action (A=top)
A. Key agency partners at the *regional* and *local* level, are engaged, including: • Workforce Investment Board(s) and local workforce development agencies • PA CareerLink® staff, including partners and Business Services Team • Appropriate Industry Partnerships • Community Action Agencies • Community College(s) and Postsecondary Education Providers • Adult Basic Education providers • TANF providers and other human service agencies Economic Development agencies • Community-based organizations • Labor-management organizations • Business representative(s) • Other:	1	2	3	4	A B C
B. Partners have compiled a list of postsecondary schools and training programs.	1	2	3	4	A B C
C. Partners agree on a definition of a career pathways framework.	1	2	3	4	A B C
D. Partners have developed a set of common goals and shared vision for establishing a career pathways framework.	1	2	3	4	A B C

2. Engage employers and conduct gap analysis.

Please indicate the phase of implementation of your region for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/ Enhance Phase	Priority for Action (A=top)
A. Working with partners, current and projected labor demand and supply have been assessed using local labor market information tools.	1	2	3	4	A B C
B. Sector(s) including high demand and growth industries are identified and selected. List sector(s):	1	2	3	4	A B C
C. The education and skill needs of employers in the region have been analyzed and gaps identified.	1	2	3	4	A B C
D. The strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and gaps within the region's education and training programs have been assessed against meeting sector and industry training needs.	1	2	3	4	A B C
E. The partners, particularly PA CareerLink® Business Services Teams, Industry Partnerships, local and regional economic development partners, and the ABLE Coalition, developed an outreach strategy to determine which employers to target and how to engage them.	1	2	3	4	A B C
F. Employers representing targeted industries have been engaged through partnership with the PA CareerLink® Business Services Team, Industry Partnerships, and local economic development partners.	1	2	3	4	A B C
G. A plan is in place to support working with employers during various phases of the project (design, launch, operation, and evaluation).	1	2	3	4	A B C

3. Clarify roles and responsibilities.

Please indicate the phase of implementation of your region for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/ Enhance Phase	Priority for Action (A=top)
A. Roles of key *regional* and *local* agencies are clearly defined and agreed to, including those for: ▪ State Workforce Agency ▪ Adult Basic Education ▪ Postsecondary Education ▪ Economic Development ▪ Human Services ▪ Local Workforce Investment Board(s) and local workforce development agencies ▪ Community College(s) and Postsecondary Education Providers ▪ Adult Basic Education providers ▪ TANF providers and Human service agencies ▪ Economic Development agencies ▪ Community-based organizations ▪ Business representative(s) ▪ Other:	1	2	3	4	A B C
B. Roles and responsibilities of partnership members are agreed upon and clearly defined.					

4. Design programs.

Please indicate the phase of implementation of your region for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/ Enhance Phase	Priority for Action (A=top)
A. Occupation-specific pathways meet local labor market needs and are employer-vetted and informed.	1	2	3	4	A B C
B. Programs are designed with multiple entry points and exit points (on-ramps and off-ramps).	1	2	3	4	A B C
C. Curricula is "chunked" or organized in progressive modules, with each level clearly articulated to the next.	1	2	3	4	A B C
D. Education and training help workers enter or advance within a specific sector or occupational field, regardless of their skills at the point of entry.	1	2	3	4	A B C
E. Curricula and instructional strategies are contextual; they make work a central context for learning and help adults attain work-readiness skills.	1	2	3	4	A B C
F. Adult basic education programs are clearly articulated with postsecondary education and training programs.	1	2	3	4	A B C
G. Programs are designed to accelerate advancement into either postsecondary education or employment, shortening the duration of training or education.	1	2	3	4	A B C
H. Appropriate assessment tools determine student/participant placement and advancement.	1	2	3	4	A B C
I. Programs lead to industry-recognized and/or postsecondary credentials that are stackable and articulate to progressively to higher-level credentials or degrees.	1	2	3	4	A B C
J. Individualized career plans support an individual's journey through the pathway, and provide "career maps," mapping for participants the education, training, and credentials they must complete to reach their goal.	1	2	3	4	A B C
K. Wraparound support services are available, including job placement services and career and financial aid counseling, especially during points of transition.	1	2	3	4	A B C
L. Education and training are accessible and flexible by varying sites and schedules.	1	2	3	4	A B C
M. Programs are organized to meet the unique needs of adults (including childcare, accommodating work	1	2	3	4	A B C

schedules with flexible scheduling, alternative class times and locations, easy entry and exit points, learning cohorts, and the innovative use of technology).					

5. Identify funding needs and sources.

Please indicate the phase of implementation of your region for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/ Enhance Phase	Priority for Action (A=top)
A. Partners identified funding needs for developing core components of the career pathway system including: ▪ Program development ▪ Professional development ▪ Operating costs ▪ Support services ▪ Other:	1	2	3	4	A B C
B. Partners have explored funding resources that could support the Career Pathway system, including: ▪ WIA Titles I, II, and IV ▪ Wagner-Peyser Act funds ▪ Carl Perkins Act funds ▪ TANF funds ▪ State funding ▪ Private foundations ▪ Employers ▪ PHEAA ▪ Other:	1	2	3	4	A B C
C. Partners assessed the financial resources necessary for covering the training costs of individual participants, including: ▪ Improving counseling and assistance to students in accessing student aid (Title IV HEA) ▪ Paying tuition and related costs with student aid programs (e.g. Pell grants, state grant programs,	1	2	3	4	A B C

PHEAA)
- Paying tuition and related costs with WIA funding (including continued training after initial employment placements toward higher level credentials)
- Attracting and expanding employer-provided training, utilization of tax credits, etc.
- Covering indirect costs of attendance.

6. Align policies and programs.

Please indicate the phase of implementation of your region for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/ Enhance Phase	Priority for Action (A=top)
A. Local and state partners identified key policy and program changes and actions necessary to implement the goals and vision for the career pathways system, including coordinating efforts across the state and/or region.	1	2	3	4	A B C
B. Local and state policymakers support a coordinated, systems approach to adult education and training.	1	2	3	4	A B C
C. Administrative policies have been assessed for each of the partner agencies (workforce, education, human services, economic development) and opportunities/barriers to alignment have been identified around: ▪ Allowable uses of funds, including cost-sharing agreements ▪ Program eligibility ▪ Performance reporting requirements ▪ Financial reporting requirements ▪ Other:	1	2	3	4	A B C
D. Legislative policy reforms to support a career pathways system have been identified and communicated to relevant authorities and policymakers.	1	2	3	4	A B C
E. A cross-program and cross-agency professional development strategy is in place.	1	2	3	4	A B C
F. Measures are used to assess and determine system change and performance (including policy changes for system-wide change).	1	2	3	4	A B C

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